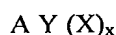


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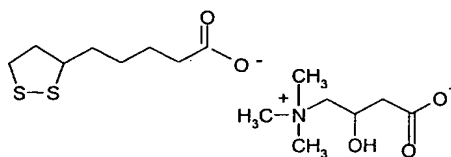
AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please add or amend the claims to read as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) [[Salt]] A salt of a thioctic acid with an L-carnitine zwitterion, said salt allowing simultaneous coadministration to a subject, represented by [[with]] the formula:



where A is



where Y is the cation of an alkaline metal, of an alkaline earth metal or is a quaternary ammonium group,
X is A or OH⁻,
x is equal to 0 when Y is the cation of an alkaline metal or a quaternary ammonium group and equal to 1 when Y is an alkaline earth metal.

2. (Original) Salt as claimed in claim 1 wherein Y is chosen from the group consisting of Na⁺ and K⁺.
3. (Original) Salt as claimed in claim 1 wherein Y is chosen from the group consisting of Mg⁺⁺ and Ca⁺⁺.
4. (Original) Salt as claimed in claim 1 wherein Y is a tetralkyl ammonium wherein the alkyl groups equal or different among each other are linear or branched and have from 1 to 10 carbon atoms.
5. (Original) Salt as claimed in claim 1 wherein the thioctic acid is in raceme form.
6. (Original) Salt as claimed in claim 1 wherein the acid is in optically active form and chosen from -R(+) or S(-) thioctic acid.
7. (Original) Process for the preparation of a salt as claimed in claim 1 comprising the following stages:

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- a) preparing a solution of an alkaline, alkaline earth metal or a quaternary ammonium salt of L-carnitine in a linear or branched C₁-C₅ alcohol, said solution having a L-carnitine concentration between 10% and 30% w/v;
 - b) adding slowly the solution of stage a) to a solution of thioctic acid, with a concentration between 5% and 15%, in a solvent chosen from the group consisting of ketones with b.p. above 75°C, esters with b.p. above 75°C, acetonitrile and linear or branched alcohols with a number of carbon atoms above 3, and
 - c) isolating the salt of formula (I) from the reaction mixture.
8. (Original) Process as claimed in claim 7 wherein in stage a) said alcohol is methanol.
9. (Previously Presented) Process as claimed in claim 7 wherein in stage b) the solution of L-carnitine is added to the solution of thioctic acid in such a quantity that in the final mixture the molar ratio between the thioctic acid and the L-carnitine is comprised between 0.85 and 1.15.
10. (Previously Presented) Process for the preparation of a salt as claimed in claim 1 comprising the following stages:
- a. preparing a solution of an alkaline, alkaline earth metal or a quaternary ammonium salt of L-carnitine in a linear or branched C₁-C₅ alcohol, said solution having a L-carnitine concentration between 10% and 30% w/v;
 - b. adding slowly the solution of stage a) slowly to a solution of thioctic acid, with a concentration between 5% and 15%, in a solvent chosen from the group consisting of ketones with b.p. above 75°C, esters with b.p. above 75°C, acetonitrile and linear or branched alcohols with a number of carbon atoms above 3, and
 - c. isolating the salt of formula (I) from the reaction mixture, said stage c) comprising the following operating phases:
 - i) removing partially the solvent in which the L-carnitine was dissolved by distillation under vacuum;
 - ii) adding the same solvent in which the thioctic acid was dissolved;
 - iii) cooling the mixtures to a temperature between 0 and 30°C;

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- iv) separating the precipitate obtained.
- 11. (Original) Process as claimed in claim 10 wherein in stage ii) the solvent is added in the quantity required to replace the solvent removed in stage i).
- 12. (Original) Process as claimed in claim 10 wherein the product obtained in stage iv) is washed and dried.
- 13. (Currently Amended) Pharmaceutical composition comprising the salt as claimed in claim 1 together with suitable excipients [[and/]]or diluents.
- 14. (Currently Amended) Dietary supplement comprising the salt as claimed in claim 1 together with suitable excipients [[and/]]or diluents.